As in the Middle Ages public opinion was dominated by the Church, the idea was accepted that a baptized Jew "had cast off the old Adam", and he was received by his fellow-Christians on an equal footing.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the adoption of Christianity by Jews was very frequent in Spain and Portugal, and still more so during the times of persecution, when many tried to save themselves by means of baptism. But also in France, Italy, Germany, and even in Poland, there were both free and forced conversions. Although these were only isolated cases they continued steadily through the centuries and were therefore not without significance.

The number of persons adopting Judaism is very small as compared to those seceding from it. In the first centuries of the Christian era, Judaism gained great numbers of proselytes among the pagans (quite apart from the Edomites converted by force), but Judaism ceased to spread when Christianity presented the pagans with the essential doctrine of Judaism—monotheism—free of the irksome ceremonial and the religious and racial conceit of the Jew. A stop was put for ever to Jewish missionary activities.

The adoption of Judaism by several Arab tribes in Yemen under King Yussuf in the sixth century had no important effects, because Yussuf s kingdom was destroyed in A.D. 530,

and whatever survived of Judaism was, for the most part, absorbed by Islam in the seventh century. There remain at present only some thirty to forty thousand Yemenite Jews in Yemen and Palestine. In the eighth century there was another mass accession to Judaism, when the King of the Khazars—a people on the Lower Volga—was converted with his court, though it is doubtful to what extent the Jewish religion was adopted and retained by the lower ranks, and whether it survived among them the destruction of their kingdom in the eleventh century. Of groups of alien proselytes existing to-day, the Falashas, the coloured Jews of the Malabar Coast, and the Subbotniki in Russia were